

Several news outlets reported on the Committee hearing to examine the Postal Service's current financial crisis.

[Government Executive wrote](#) :

Staffing levels at the Postal Service took center stage at a House hearing on the struggling agency's finances on Thursday, as lawmakers prodded USPS to strike a balance between streamlining its workforce while ensuring employees' jobs are substantive and stable...

Postmaster General John Potter acknowledged "as the volume has declined, we no longer have eight-hour jobs in all locations," but he said the move toward shorter days was not driven by a preference for part-time workers, but rather by changes in work processes such as automated mail sorting. Potter also noted employees still could build careers at the Postal Service by working fewer hours.

Potter said he hoped negotiations with the agency's unions this year would win him the flexibility to reduce the workforce where necessary, and to move to part-time jobs and create more elastic positions that allow employees to perform multiple functions. The Postal Service, backed by the Government Accountability Office, is asking Congress to pass legislation that would require an arbitrator to take the USPS' financial situation into account when making decisions affecting labor and management...

Lawmakers insisted repeatedly that even as the Postal Service confronts harsh financial realities, the agency must taken into consideration the jobs of postal workers.

From the [San Francisco Chronicle](#):

The same forces that have ravaged the music, newspaper and book publishing industries are aimed at the U.S. Postal Service, threatening much more than the Saturday mail...

In a testy hearing Thursday of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, [Democrats and Republicans were dubious about Potter's claim that the agency will pile up a stunning \\$238 billion loss](#)

within the decade. The announcement came as the Postal Service is heading into contract negotiations with its powerful unions, where it will demand concessions.

Democrats lauded the Postal Service as a source of secure, well-paying jobs, with some of them saying they came from postal families. Rep. Dennis Kucinich, D-Ohio, said the Postal Service is vital to the poor and elderly "on the opposite side of the digital divide" and strongly opposed further closing of post offices...

Still, no one questions the grim outlook. The General Accountability Office has said the Postal Service's business model is "not viable," because it is unable to reduce its costs fast enough to keep up with shrinking volume. The accounting office said Congress needs to think hard about such basic things as the meaning of universal mail service in the digital age.

You can read the full Government Executive story [here](#) , and the full San Francisco Chronicle story [here](#)